

The Accessible Information and Communication Standard

Good for Everyone, Law in Manitoba

Accessible Information and Communication Standard Training

Facilitator's Guide

March 2024

Introduction

The [Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation](#) requires all organizations to remove barriers related to information and communication for people with disabilities by creating policies, measures and practices respecting accessible communication.

Requirements focus on the following areas:

1. Web content
2. The duty to notify
3. Responding to requests for accessible information and communication supports
4. Feedback process
5. Training
6. Policy documentation
7. Specific requirements for educational institutions and public libraries

Organizations need to consider the ways in which Manitobans interact with or access information they provide. If you receive a request for information in another way, you must:

- consult with the person making the request to identify a support or a format that removes the barrier
- provide the format in a timely manner
- not charge the person making the request more than what you would charge to someone who did not make the request

There are many ways people access information and communication as a result of their differing abilities to see, hear and understand information or communicate with others. Presenting information in a variety of ways will improve communication for everyone.

Accessible information and communication such as websites, written and training materials benefit all audiences by making information clear, direct, and easy to understand. Accessible information and communication is usable by a wide audience, including people with disabilities and those who use a variety of devices, software and hardware. Providing accessible information and communication is important to ensure that all people have equal access to information.

Public, private and non-profit sectors must comply with the Accessible Information and Communication Standard.

Note to the Facilitator

Employers can complete the Accessible Information and Communication Standard learning module on their own. However, group participation and discussion can be helpful to relate the training content to your workplace.

The facilitator can set the agenda and ensure all voices are heard. The goal is to help apply the law to the context of the organization and to determine next steps toward barrier removal and full compliance with the standard.

The Accessible Information and Communication Standard aims to remove and prevent barriers that exist digitally, in-print, or through interaction with technology or people and adopts globally recognized web content accessibility guidelines as a minimum requirement.

Choose all or some of the following questions and exercises to discuss current and future policies and practices in your organization.

Questions to Guide Group Discussion

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Examples of persons who benefit from accessible information and communication include:

- **People who have no vision or low vision:** They may use screen readers or large print programs such as the ZoomText Magnifier/Reader.
- **People with learning disabilities, such as dyslexia:** They may need a document in an audio format.
- **People with dexterity disabilities:** They may use voice recognition software or a tracking ball and mouse instead of a computer keyboard.
- **People who are Deaf or hard of hearing:** They may require information interpreted in American Sign Language (ASL).
- **People with cognitive or intellectual disabilities:** They may request documents in plain language.

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: Organizations must remove barriers related to information and communication for people with disabilities by creating and acting on policies, measures and practices respecting accessible communication. Ask participants to brainstorm the various ways modifications and supports can be presented in alternative formats to

meet an individual's need. For example, web content, types of alternate or accessible formats or communication supports.

Question 2: According to 2022 data from Statistics Canada, almost 30 per cent (29.2%) of Manitobans had a disability. Ask the participants to brainstorm the various scenarios in which someone in their workplace may require clear, direct, easy to understand information.

This may include identifying people who may use a variety of devices, software and hardware to access information, communicate or request an alternative format.

Question 3: Discuss what an organization needs to do when a person requests accessible information through a communication support or an accessible format.

Question 4: Which organizations in Manitoba are required to provide accessible communication training to their employees, agents, and volunteers assigned the applicable duties?

Applicable duties include web content development and maintenance, purchasing or procuring information technology or communication tools, communicating directly with the public or other organizations in Manitoba on behalf of the organization, development or implementation of the organizations accessible communication measures, policies and practices, and educators at educational institutions.

Exercises for Group Discussion

To encourage discussion, the exercises below can be shared with the group. Once participants have shared their views, the group may then wish to discuss and compare answers.

Exercise 1: Accessible formats and communication supports

When requested, you must provide information and communication in an accessible manner to people with disabilities. Alternatives to standard print are often referred to as accessible formats, and ways to help communication between people are referred to as communication supports.

Discuss the process of providing accessible formats and communication supports.

Answer: When a request is received, you must consult with the person to identify an appropriate accessible format or communication support depending on the person's accessibility needs. Then, provide the format that removes the barrier in a timely manner. Some exceptions may apply.

Exceptions to providing the identified support or format may not apply in the following situations:

- it is not technically feasible to provide the information through the requested format or support

- technology required to provide the information through a communication support or accessible format is not readily available
- providing the accommodation would result in demonstrable undue hardship to your organization
- your organization does not have direct control over the information
- the information relates to product labels or other product information

Some examples of accessible formats and communications supports may include:

- reading written information to a person directly
- large print documents and information written in plain language
- text transcripts of audio or visual information
- handwritten notes instead of spoken word
- an electronic document accessible for use with a screen reader

Accessible formats and communication supports must be provided in a timely manner and at a cost that is not more than the regular costs charged to other people.

Exercise 2: Feedback Process

Under the Accessible Information and Communication Standard, organizations must establish a process for receiving and responding to feedback related to accessible communication. Organizations must document actions taken in response to feedback received and make that documentation available on request.

Brainstorm ways that your organization may implement a process for receiving and responding to accessible communication feedback which may include requests for accessible formats or communication supports and complaints.

Consider ways that your organization communicates with or provides information to Manitobans and any accessibility feedback that may have been provided to your organization in the past.

Legal Disclaimer

This training resource is not legal advice. It aims to assist organizations to meet the basic training requirements under Manitoba's Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation. The training does not replace the content of the [Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation](#) or [The Accessibility for Manitobans Act](#). If there is any conflict between this training resource and the regulation or the act, the latter two shall prevail.

For more information, please contact the:

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